

Introduced by Senator Morrell

June 26, 2014

Senate Resolution No. 52—Relative to the 4th of July.

1 WHEREAS, July 4, 2014, marks the 238th anniversary of the
2 signing of the Declaration of Independence, and by the adoption
3 of that document — formally entitled, “The unanimous Declaration
4 of the thirteen United States of America” — the nation we today
5 know as the United States of America officially came into being,
6 an occasion forever memorialized by President Abraham Lincoln
7 in the words of his Gettysburg Address as when “... our fathers
8 brought forth upon this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty,
9 and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal”;
10 and

11 WHEREAS, On June 7, 1776, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania,
12 at a location today known as Independence Hall, Virginia delegate
13 Richard Henry Lee brought the following resolution before the
14 Second Continental Congress of the United Colonies: “Resolved,
15 That these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and
16 independent states, that they are absolved from all allegiance to
17 the British Crown, and that all political connection between them
18 and the state of Great Britain is, and ought to be, totally dissolved”;
19 and

20 WHEREAS, On June 8, 1776, Lee’s resolution was referred to
21 a committee of the whole of the Continental Congress, at which
22 time they spent most of that day, as well as June 10, debating
23 independence; and

24 WHEREAS, On June 11, 1776, a “Committee of Five” — with
25 Thomas Jefferson of Virginia being picked unanimously as its first
26 member, and also including John Adams of Massachusetts,

1 Benjamin Franklin of Pennsylvania, Robert R. Livingston of New
2 York, and Roger Sherman of Connecticut — was charged with
3 drafting a declaration of independence for consideration by the
4 Continental Congress; and

5 WHEREAS, The members of the “Committee of Five” assigned
6 Jefferson the task of producing a draft declaration, and on June
7 28, 1776, he produced a draft that, with minor changes by the
8 committee members, was forwarded to the Congress for its further
9 consideration; and

10 WHEREAS, On July 2, 1776, the Second Continental Congress
11 adopted the Lee resolution upon the affirmative vote of 12 of the
12 13 colonial delegations, an occasion that delegate and future
13 President John Adams detailed to his wife Abigail in a letter written
14 July 3, 1776, as follows: “Yesterday the greatest Question was
15 decided, which ever was debated in America, and a greater perhaps,
16 never was or will be decided among Men”; and

17 WHEREAS, On July 4, 1776, after further debate and changes
18 to the committee document, the Continental Congress adopted the
19 Declaration of Independence establishing the United States of
20 America, to which John Hancock that day affixed his signature,
21 with 55 other delegates representing the 13 colonies — now states
22 of the newly created nation — signing the declaration within the
23 next several weeks; and

24 WHEREAS, The 4th of July is a day unlike any other — in the
25 history of the United States of America, and indeed, the world —
26 in that not only is it the day that an infant nation formally defied
27 the most powerful empire on earth in a quest for freedom, liberty,
28 and independence, but even more importantly because on that day
29 this new nation declared as a “self-evident truth” — known and
30 knowable to all persons at all times in all places throughout the
31 world — the radical notion that “all men are created equal ...
32 endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that
33 among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness”; and

34 WHEREAS, Since its adoption and bold pronouncement more
35 than two centuries ago, the Declaration of Independence and the
36 principles that animate that timeless document have inspired
37 literally billions of persons around the world to pursue freedom in
38 their own nations, for themselves and their own loved ones, and
39 for their fellow men and women, and remain today an imperfectly
40 unrealized goal to which all Americans and all who cherish liberty

1 must rededicate themselves, just as the drafters and signers of the
2 Declaration of Independence did by declaring: “with a firm reliance
3 on the protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge[d] to
4 each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor”; and

5 WHEREAS, The United States and California have a long and
6 generous tradition of welcoming people from all nations to our
7 shores. This tradition continues today as we invite all who yearn
8 to be free, with a respect for the rule of law, to join us and in the
9 spirit of good will mutually pledge ourselves to the principles laid
10 out in the Declaration of Independence; and

11 WHEREAS, Preserving civil liberty is one of the most important
12 blessings and a most valuable inheritance this side of heaven.
13 Therefore, a basic knowledge of America’s political principles
14 contained in our United States Constitution and Declaration is
15 necessary for the promotion of prosperity, virtue, and public
16 happiness. In the spirit of Abraham Lincoln, this system of good
17 laws and statutes that limit government’s powers and ranks the
18 citizen above the state for our mutual benefit, is the foundation
19 and the cord that link the hearts of patriotic and liberty-loving
20 people together; and

21 WHEREAS, On this and every 4th of July, it is both proper and
22 fitting that the institutions of California government, and indeed
23 all Californians, express heartfelt gratitude and indebtedness to
24 those men and women who have served in the Armed Forces of
25 the United States, and in particular to those who have suffered the
26 injuries of battle and who have made the ultimate sacrifice in
27 protecting freedom and liberty around the world, recalling the
28 words of President Abraham Lincoln that, as a result of their
29 profound sacrifice, “... this nation, under God, shall have a new
30 birth of freedom — and that government of the people, by the
31 people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth”; now,
32 therefore, be it

33 *Resolved by the Senate of the State of California*, That the Senate
34 of the State of California does — and intends to every year
35 immediately preceding the 4th of July — take this opportunity to
36 recognize and celebrate July 4, 2014, and the 238th anniversary
37 of the birth of our great nation and the signing of the Declaration
38 of Independence that this day represents; and be it further

39 *Resolved*, That the Senate of the State of California calls upon
40 all the people of the great State of California, and the United States

1 of America, to take the opportunity of the 4th of July holiday to
2 obtain a greater knowledge and understanding of the facts and
3 circumstances that compelled the 13 original colonies to declare
4 their independence, and of the timeless principles of liberty,
5 equality, and self-determination that rest at the heart of the
6 Declaration of Independence; and be it further

7 *Resolved*, That the Senate of the State of California, on behalf
8 of a grateful citizenry, hereby expresses its heartfelt thanks,
9 appreciation, and prayers to all who have served — and who
10 currently serve — in the Armed Forces of the United States, in
11 recognition of the countless sacrifices made and the indispensable
12 role these brave men and women have played, even before the
13 founding of our nation on July 4, 1776, in preserving, protecting,
14 and defending the freedoms and liberties of all Americans, and
15 expanding freedom throughout the world; and be it further

16 *Resolved*, That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of
17 this resolution to the Governor of the State of California, and to
18 the author for appropriate distribution.